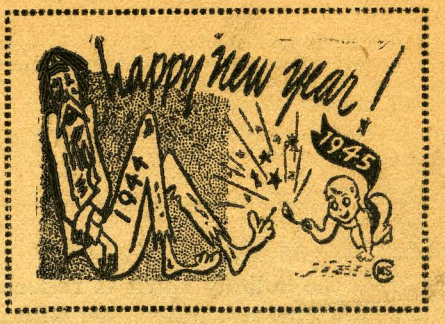
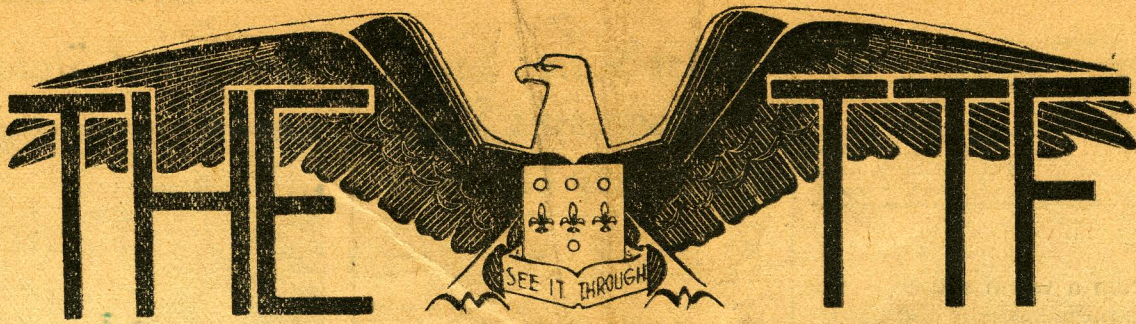


Somewhere in Germany
Thursday, Dec. 28, 1944
Vol. 1, No. 7.



German Defenses Smashed to Roer

20,000 Xmas Packages for Fighting Men

Big smiles predominated throughout the regiment last week as frontline men tore open their Christmas packages from home while they crouched in foxholes, sat in cellars or lay in their bog cabin dugouts. Close to 20,000 packages were received in the regiment in a four day period, Sgt. Joseph Flood, regimental postmaster estimated. The packages were of every description and size from the type that seemed to contain a ring to the large cartons which were the ultimate in weight.

There were all kinds of gifts reported. Some revealed the foresight of the folks at home, others seemed to express their naivety. One package contained a box of shoe polish, another a pair of house slippers. While other more practical gifts included gloves and sweaters. Home-made cakes and candies headed the list.

To the frontline Joe, just receiving a hunk of home made his Christmas a cheerful one.

Veteran of African Campaign Wears DSC

Not only has S/Sgt. Richard Drury of Rochester, N. Y., Co. H mortarman, the distinction of bearing the Distinguished Service Cross, but he has the added honor of having Lt. Gen. George S. Patton's own medal. Drury had fought with the First Division and distinguished himself through his heroism in action in Tunisia. He was cited for remaining at his post in the midst of enemy artillery fire. Though the members of his mortar crew were killed, and his gun bowled over several times, he kept the gun firing until it was knocked out two enemy machine gun nests.

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Hill Eight Hard Nut — But Not for Co. G

Hill «Eight» was a hard nut to crack. Word came down to Co. G, under Lt. Joseph Macaluso, from Battalion Headquarters that the fortified height was impeding the advance of higher echelons. It had to be taken. Over 700 feet high and dominating the surrounding territory for many miles, it guards the approaches to the plains before Duren. The enemy was using it tactically as an OP. The entire hillside bristled with direct fire weapons.

The attack order was given on the dark, chilly night of December 14th. Co. G once more plunged forward with two platoons on line. Tired and cold, the doughboys moved swiftly through the maze of trenches that wound ever upward. The leading platoon, led by Lt. Harvey Vollmer of Illinois, moved in from the right flank.

At the foot of the hills, they found three Germans who surrendered without firing a shot. They told their captives that the other Germans defending the hill had withdrawn. But the men were not to be taken in by any Nazi trickery though surprisingly enough no resistance was offered this small task force until they had reached about two-thirds of the way up the main horizontal trench.

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What Price Peace? . . .



With cold stiff fingers, crouched in his dugout, Tec 4 Oliver Weissmuller, Mq. Btry. 908th FA Bn, drew this pen and ink sketch especially for the TTF. Weissmuller, in his spare time, has drawn cartoons of the incidents he has observed since entering the army. He taught art at the Rosemont school in Philadelphia.

AP and Mine Platoon Pave Way for Tanks and Infantry

Like stage hands in a play and sound men in a radio station, men of the ammunition and pioneer platoons and the mine platoon remain behind the scenes of battle. Their work may not be conspicuous in action but its responsible, helpful to frontline units and destructive to the enemy. Besides maintaining ammunition dumps, the A and P and mine platoons have paved the way for the advancing infantry and armor by clearing mine fields, removing road blocks, and barbed wire entanglements, destroying booby traps. At times they have pitched in and helped the line company ammunition bearers bring vital supplies under fire to the men at the front. They have operated flame throwers against enemy pill-boxes and have constructed battalion OPs and built small trestle bridges under heavy enemy shell-fire.

Acts of heroism and real courage are numerous among these men. Every time they probe for a mine, they are inviting the attentions of the «grim reaper». Every time they remove a road block, which is usually zeroed in, they're dodging enemy shell fragments. Every approach to Gey was heavily mined and booby trapped. Tanks couldn't move forward to support the infantrymen and the infantrymen had

to be exceptionally wary.

Most of the mines were covered by enemy machine gun crossfire. To remove them in daylight was suicide. The A and P and mine platoons crawled forward under cover of darkness to remove these hazards and clear the way for the all-out assault.

The courage of these men was demonstrated again in Anti-tank's mine platoon led by Lt. Jack Dempsey of Colgate, Okla. Three infantrymen and a medic lay seriously wounded in a field thickly sown with S-mines. The medic had gone to the aid of the rifleman and had also stepped on a mine. Dempsey and Pfc. Forrest Brittain of Belwood, N. C. volunteered to clear a path through the field to these men. Probing with their bayonets, they disarmed the mines and they proceeded forward. They reached the wounded men and carried them back to the waiting medic's jeep. Dempsey and Brittain had previously been awarded the Silver Star for their gallantry in action in the Normandy campaign.

A similar incident occurred in the first battalion. Two Co. C men were wounded in an anti-personnel mine field ringing German defenses. Lt. Howard O. Hambrook of Terre Haute, Ind., 1st Battalion A and P platoon

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Gey Stronghold Falls to 331st, Doughboys Punch Way to River

Hurling their might against the German town of Gey, men of the 331st Infantry Combat Team smashed one of the most formidable Nazi strongholds on the outskirts of the Hurtgen forest last week and drove the stubbornly resisting enemy to the banks of the Roer River just south of Duren. From one point of high ground to another, the doughboys with support of tanks and artillery, stabbed relentlessly forward and pushed the Germans back while beating off a series of successive savage counterattacks. Capturing the towns of Horn Berzbuir and Lendersdorff, the men held a firm grip on the west bank of the Roer approximately seven days after their initial attack was launched.

Two-Fisted Doughboy Clears out Enemy Strongpoint Alone

A swollen hand is the only after-affect that T/Sgt. Carl Hansen of Englishtown, N. J. has from his encounter with a number of Nazis defending a strongpoint in Gey. But from the affect this Co. I doughboy left upon the enemy, they undoubtedly thought that a cyclone had struck them. For within a period of five minutes, Hansen invaded the Nazi position, killed three Jerries, knocked out one with a right upper-cut to the jaw and took 16 prisoners — single-handedly.

His advance was stopped when a heavy machine gun fire coming from their left flank. Pinned down, the company commander called for Hansen and ordered him to attack the machine gun nest with a squad. A few minutes earlier Hansen's platoon leader had been wounded and Hansen was in command of the platoon.

With a squad of men Hansen went forward to the house where the fire was coming from. He decided to try lone-wolf tactics as he felt that a charge upon the house would inevitably result in a loss of his men. Leaving his squad, he stealthily crept toward the house, flattened himself against the wall and edged his way around the corner into the door. Quietly he peered into a room on his left. There were two Nazis manning a machine gun. He finished them with his rifle and turned around in time to riddle another Jerry leaping toward him from another room.

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A Father Writes...

Editor TTF
331st Combat Team
Dear Editor:

A number of copies of your paper came to me from my son, a lieutenant in your Anti-tank company. Much of your stuff revives memories of 1918-19, when I was a young officer of the Field Artillery in France.

I do hope many of your readers will hang on to copies of your paper. For 25 years from now they will have a value beyond expression. The men who do not save issues which contain stories of particular interest to them, will experience much regret before many years have passed.

Like many another old «bird», I'm back in uniform pitching at a job I can do possibly better than you youngsters could do it. You, in turn, are doing a job we carried 26 years ago, and one which we could no longer do.

I'm proud to have my son in your outfit. You are doing a grand job at what we failed to accomplish many years ago.

Sincerely,
W. T. Poulter, Sr.
Lt. Col. CWS
Chief, Arsenal Operations

Gey was one of the most strategic strongpoints in the network of German defenses protecting the vital approaches to Duren. Situated at the edge of the Hurtgen Forest, it lies in a valley through which all roads leading from the forest cross. The Germans were apparently determined to hold this town for they had built it into a veritable fortress. Every house was a complete arsenal. At each window large supplies of ammunition were stacked. The basement of every home, reinforced with double walls of cement and steel, was a pill-box. For three days the Nazis continued to pour reinforcements into the town as fiercely fighting American doughboys in a house to house struggle punched again and again until the enemy was driven from the cellars.

Nearly every house in the town had a crack at this heavily defended position and felt the sting of the enemy's force. They fought their way through intensive mortar, machine gun and small arms fire. And as each house was taken they held it against the most violent counterattacks. Supporting tanks were knocked out on both sides of the town by mines in the streets, bazookas and artillery fire. Supplies could only trickle through to the men. It was impossible for jeeps or any vehicle to get near the town as the Jerries continuously pounded the town's approaches with artillery fire. Basements of houses became aid stations where only medical aid men of the companies cared for the wounded. There were no battle lines. Each house was either an American or German sector. For two days and a night the attacking companies were without water, many men without food.

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No Nazi Big Enough For Scrappy Soldier

S/Sgt. Ted Wojner of Lowell, Mass., Co. A doughboy, is only slightly more than five feet in height — the smallest man in his company — but his buddies claim that there isn't a German soldier big enough for him. He's proven to be one of the scrappiest soldiers this side of the Atlantic. His fighting spirit was displayed again when he became a oneman army in the battle of Gey.

Wojner jumped into the fray with all the zest of a man looking for a good fight. He started out with one patrol, cleaned out an enemy point, returned, formed another patrol and cleaned out another point. His final score tallied six patrols; six enemy points wiped out. Not satisfied with this, Wojner struck out alone and in less than an hour two more enemy strongpoints were silenced. On his return for more ammunition, he heard a noise in a basement window and stopped in time to grab a Nazi who was peering out. Pvt. Vincent Ionello, Rye, N. Y., happened by at the time and together, each tugging at an ear, pulled the Jerry out.

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Xmas in the Field. . .



Enemy shells try to halt tanks moving forward in support of doughboys.

Pvt. Richard Sturm and Pfc. John Burns, 2nd Bn Hq, are preparing their Christmas tree with the help of a package from home and a fir tree from a nearby ever-green forest.

Incoming. . .



For The Fuehrer

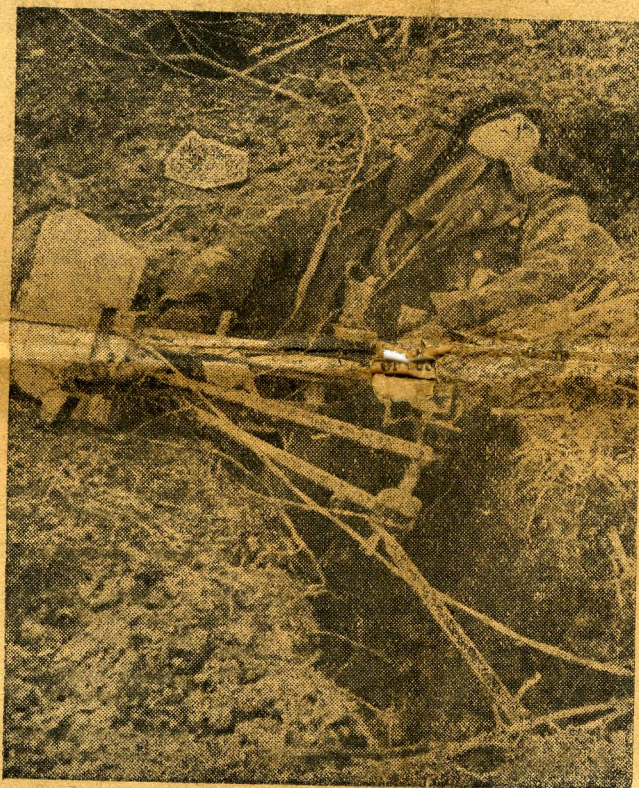
Outgoing Mail. . .

Observing. . .



Lt. Donald Johnson of Logan, Ohio, Cn. Co. forward observer is preparing to creep closer to enemy lines to direct artillery fire while Cpl. Albert Allen of Elmira, N. Y. keeps in contact with the company CP. via radio.

A well dug-in trench, a heavy machine gun and a fanatic Nazi couldn't stop the advance of American doughboys.



This determined looking gunner is ready to send another mortar toward enemy lines while number two man drops the shell in the chamber. Just as the picture was taken enemy shells rained in the area and the photographer made a bee-line for a foxhole, failing to get the names of these Co. H men.

Teamwork. . .

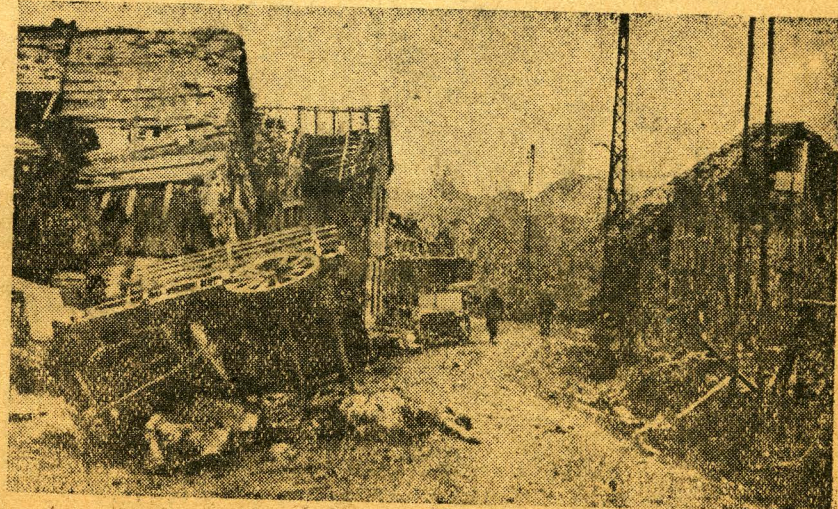
These are but a few of the hundreds of pictures taken as the 331st combat team fought their way from the Hurtgen Forest through towns, over hills to the banks of the Roer. Other photos of doughboys, redlegs, engineers and medics will follow in later issues.

Ducking Low. . .



Pfc. John Williams of Unadilla Forks, N. Y. and Sgt. Hubert M. Johnson of Statesville, N. Car., crouch in War I type trenches while artillery shells whine overhead.

Broken Town. . .



The destruction of Gey which had been ordered by Der Fuehrer to hold at all costs.



Doughboys advance alongside tanks in their attack against Gey.